

A Word about our Lenten Study

Over the years I have searched for a series that would provide a concise and engaging introduction to holy Scripture that would fit into the time frame of 45- minute sessions. I was interested in a presentation style that would allow us to pause and discuss as well as be organized in such a way that I could prepare supplemental materials and notes ahead of time to facilitate easy access to what may seem like a Herculean task – navigating the 88 books which are our Bible.



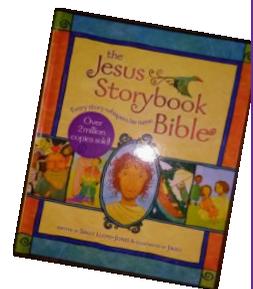
I recently discovered that the Presbyterian Church has a program entitled Theocademy which presents 15-20 minute video teachings by leaders in specific areas. The Reverend Dr. Margaret Aymer, Associate Professor of New Testament and Area Chair of Biblical Studies at the Interdenominational Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia, will be our source for engaging the New Testament. More than a study of a particular book of the new Testament, our Lenten study will engage the New Testament as a whole – unpacking both the historical and religious context. Whether you have studied the Bible fairly extensively or whether, like many more of your pew mates than you might think, you haven't opened a Bible yourself and don't know where to start. In 40-minute time slots after church we will together crack the bindings and codes of our sacred text book. **Try something new. Stretch yourself. Take a risk. Let's do this together. Everything you need will be provided and if you have a Bible bring it along. Come to any or all of the sessions as works for you. I promise you will appreciate Dr. Aymer's presentation style and your hearing of the lessons each Sunday will be enhanced.**

We are working to provide children's supervision / program so parents can attend.

A Word about Lent for Families with Children

Resources: *Let God's People Go!* Beginning at the Ash Wednesday services there are children's Lent resources available for home use. Please be sure to pick up a copy of Let God's People Go! A sticker journey unfolding the story of Moses, Pharaoh, and the deliverance through the Red Sea to the Promise Land.

The small accompanying booklet directs the reading of a verse or two of the story followed by a two or three sentence reflection, leading question, or prayer to help everyone learn the story and it's meaning. A panoramic diorama comes to life as new stickers are applied each day much like an Advent calendar.



The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every story whispers his name Once again, we have provided a leaflet suggesting Bible stories especially appropriate for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. This is the children's Bible that is part of our Sunday school curriculum.

If you have not yet have this wonderful, engaging, easy to share children's Bible Kathryn has copies available for \$10 – a bit less than Amazon because we bought them in bulk. We strongly encourage the use of this Bible in your homes as you raise your children with the stories of our faith.

Illustrated Children's Ministry Coloring Pages As we have done in other seasons of the year, we will make available beautiful, detailed, scripture-based coloring pages to illuminate our faith story. Please be sure to pick them up each week as Lent unfolds.

Faithful Family Events There will be multiple opportunities during Lent and Holy Week when special programs will be provided for families with children and youth. Please check the weekly calendar in this handout so that you can take full advantage of these offerings and enhancing your family journey from Ashes to Easter!

A Word about our 2 Lenten Outreach Projects

We will focus on two outreach efforts this Lent and Easter Season:



'Birthdays-to-Go' We will be creating bags to be distributed through **The Center for Food Action in Mahwah** and our connection at **Dogwood School, Oakland**. Please help by filling the collection box in the narthex with: cake mix, canned icing, birthday candles, party plates, napkins, streamers, disposable cake pans, colored tissue paper, and blank birthday cards. **Lent** is a time when we don't do celebrations EXCEPT birthdays.

For the children who will receive these bags birthday celebrations might not happen any time. This is an opportunity for us to help families make each child's birthday a bit more special. Don't forget to check your 'stuff-closet' for supplies you have purchased and never used! There will also be a donation jar. It will cost \$10 to fill a birthday bag.

All God's Creatures We will ramp up our efforts to provide donations for our part in this ministry. Please remember to put a bag of dry cat food in your shopping basket to help care for the animals protected by All God's Creatures. Our goal is for each family to provide a bag of food. There will also be a donation jar.



All God's Creatures also helps with vet bills to owners not able to afford care for their pets. If you have any questions please speak with Jeanne Sylvester.

This Easter, in addition to flowers for the altar, our altar beautification will be split between All God's Creatures and purchasing gift cards for the 'Birthdays-to-God' bags.



The First Sunday of Lent, March 1st

Worship: Great Litany at both 8 and 10 AM services of Holy Eucharist. 10 AM will begin with children burying the Alleluias and butterflies in a locked trunk where they will stay until Easter.

Education: Children's Sunday school will learn the story of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness and will pack snacks for Oakland school children. Children's choir will also rehearse during class time. **Adult Education** offering will be an opportunity to view the address of Bishop Carlye J. Hughes to the Diocesan Convention at the end of January. In her signature engaging and inspiring style she captivated the room of nearly 700. Please join us!

Special Opportunity Can you imagine you or your family taking a one night Lenten break from screen time? Barnstable Academy at 8 Wright Way in Oakland (Nicholas King's school) is holding a free screening of **SCREENAGERS: Growing up in the digital age**. The evening, which runs from 7 to 9 PM will include viewing this documentary addressing the impact of screen-time on children and youth and offer strategies for parents in navigating this increasingly challenging and invasive reality. A panel discussion with experts in the field will follow the film. Please help with planning by registering at www.barnstableacademy.com/outreach-events/screenagers. For more information on the film visit screenagersmovie.com. Don't wait until your child is a teen. Get ahead of the curve! Tell a friend.

The Second Sunday of Lent, March 8th – Daylight Savings Time!

Worship: 8 and 10 AM services of Holy Eucharist. At 10 AM the choir will sing a beautiful choral prelude in addition to their anthem.

Education: Children's Sunday school will learn about why pretzels are a traditional Lenten snack.



They will also cover the Palm Sunday story in the Jesus Storybook Bible with video telling as they prepare to create the matching chancel hanging for Palm Sunday to complete the two-hanging set they started last year. Children's choir will rehearse during class time.

In the **Adult Study** we will begin the Theocademy program encountering the New Testament. Today's session is entitled 'What is the New Testament' and provides a framework to understand the context in which the New Testament books were written, the historical influences on the narratives, and the kinds of books and letters that are included.

Friday, March 13th

Seniors Lunch Join your St. Alban's friends for simple lunch and fellowship at Double Ai Chinese restaurant, 107 Terhune Drive, Wayne. Speak with Dagi Murphy or Kathryn if you would like a ride.

Parents Night Out All children and youth of the parish age 4 and up are invited to join Reverend Kathryn at the rectory for PNO from 6 to 9 PM (Note we are trying an earlier start time) We will be making Eucharist bread and cookies for a bake sale on Sunday to support the Birthdays-To-Go outreach project.



The Third Sunday of Lent, March 15th

Worship: 8 and 10 AM services of Holy Eucharist. It is Family Sunday at 10 AM. There will be an intergenerational homily and the children's choir will offer the piece they have been preparing.

Intergenerational Faithful Families Following the service will be our Lenten Intergenerational offering. We will be making Resurrection Egg sets. These are plastic eggs, kept in an egg carton, that each contain a token / symbol of the events in Jesus life from Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost. Reverend Kathryn will lead this program which will teach / review each story and the symbol representing it as we fill the eggs.

Usher and Greeter Training Following the service there will be training for all ushers and greeters. This will include regular practices as well as our new emergency procedures and the role of ushers and greeters. All current and interested ushers and greeters are asked to attend this important 30-minute session.

Additional Opportunity – Interfaith Families of Northern New Jersey 12:30 – 1:15

Reverend Kathryn will be hosting an Interfaith Families group for a visit to St. Alban's. This group of families, whose members are both Christian and Jewish, gather monthly to learn about and share life as multi-faith families. Their visit will include a tour and explanation of the important spaces and faith traditions of our church. Kathryn would welcome members of the parish to join in being part of the welcome team!

The 4th Sunday of Lent, March 22nd

Worship: 8 and 10 AM Holy Eucharist. *We will hold fire evacuations drills during both services this morning as part of our emergency preparedness program.*



Education Children's Sunday school will cover the story of Jesus clearing the temple of the money changers and merchants that is part of the events of Holy Week. They will continue to prepare a choir piece for Easter and work on the Palm Sunday chancel hanging. In the **Adult Study**, we will continue our study by learning about the five types of narratives that make up the New Testament and what makes each distinct. Did you realize that the New Testament includes personal narratives, sermons, letters to groups, letters to individuals, and apocalyptic writings? Through this session you we will identify the characteristics of each, when they were written, who wrote them, what they have in common and where they differ, and what all that has to do with how we interpret the timeless lessons they contain.

Looking ahead: If you would like to be a reader on **Palm Sunday for the Passion Gospel** the sign-up list will be available today. We rotate all parts to share the experience with everyone who is interested. Please indicate you interest so that scripts can be distributed.



The 5th Sunday of Lent, March 29th

Worship: 8 and 10 AM Holy Eucharist

Education Children's Sunday school will be exploring the story of Maundy Thursday and the Last Supper through their children's bible and video. The children will then decorate Birthday-to-Go bags.

The **Adult Study** will move on to explore the Apostle Paul, his followers, and the letters associated with their life and ministries.

Pop-Up Youth Ministry Event 4-6 PM at Grace Van Vorst, Jersey City

We will gather at church at 3:15 to carpool. Please bring \$5 to cover supper and register online.



Palm Sunday, April 5th



Worship: 8 and 10 AM Holy Eucharist

We will begin together outside, weather permitting, for the Blessing of Palms and Palm Sunday Procession commemorating Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Both services will include the reading of the Passion Gospel. At the 10 AM service the youngest children will have a special Sunday school lesson exploring Palm Sunday and the older elementary children and youth will participate in the main liturgy.

Faithful Families Intergenerational Event Following the service we will have stations set up where everyone can learn to make palm crosses, plant living grass Easter baskets that will sprout within the week, and help to fill the eggs for the hunt next week!



Holy Week in our Family of Faith

Tuesday of Holy Week ~ Clergy Renewal of Vows and Blessing of Oils

Each year, all around the country, Bishops gather the clergy of their dioceses to renew Ordination vows, bless the sacred oils for Baptism and Healing, and share lunch. Ours is being held at Grace Church, Madison and Kathryn will be in attendance. Please hold all the Bishops and Clergy of the Episcopal Church and all Christian traditions in your prayers on this particular day.

Maundy Thursday and Good Friday

We will again share these sacred days with our brothers and sisters in faith from Messiah Lutheran Church, Oakland. Everyone is encouraged to participate in these offerings that mark significant events in Jesus's life and our faith witness. We must walk through Maundy Thursday and Good Friday with Jesus in order to stand with him in the light of Easter dawn.

Maundy Thursday We will gather in our parish hall beginning at 6:30 PM for the beautiful and holy service of readings while we share a simple meal. We will then process to the church for the Holy Eucharist which includes the foot washing, for those who desire, and the powerful stripping and washing of the altar. We leave the darkened, stark church in silence. This is an important night for all ages to experience together.

Good Friday 12 Noon The Liturgy of Good Friday with Stations of the Cross at St. Alban's.
2:30 PM Children and Family interactive Good Friday stations of the cross with age appropriate activity
7:30 PM Good Friday Tenebrae with combined choirs at Messiah Lutheran, Oakland

Holy Saturday 10 AM short Vigil Prayers followed at 10:15 AM with preparing the church for Easter ~ ALL HANDS ON DECK!

The Feast of the Resurrection, April 12th
HE IS RISEN INDEED! ALLELUIA!
BRING YOUR BELLS TO CHURCH!!

8 AM Festive Holy Eucharist with music

10 AM Festive Holy Eucharist including the return of the Alleluias, flowering of the cross, the Great Procession, special music and both choirs, children's homily and pew activities, sermon, and the celebration of the Holy Eucharist!



The traditional egg hunt will follow during the festive coffee hour. **HE IS RISEN! ALLELUIA!!!**